

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 313052 TOSEC 340123
ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 /024 R

66011

DRAFTE BY:AF:KSMITH

APPROVED BY:AF:WESCHAUFLE JR.

S/S-PSEBASTIAN

-----300309Z 027085 /62

P 300034Z DEC 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 313052 TOSEC 340123

FOLLOWING REPEAT GABORONE 2386 SENT SECSTATE INFO DAR ES
SALAAM LUSAKA LONDON MAPUTO PRETORIA USUN DEC 28.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 2386

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, BC, CH, RH

SUBJECT: REPORTED GOB DECISION TO ACQUIRE PRC ARMS AND ADVISORS

REF: A. GABORONE 2364 (NOTAL) B. LUSAKA 3381 (NOTAL)

1. SPECIAL BRANCH OFFICER INFORMED EMBOFF DECEMBER 24 ON
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL BASIS THAT GOB HAS AGREED TO ACCEPT
CHINESE ARMS AND LIMITED NUMBER OF ADVISORS TO BOLSTER ITS
ABILITY TO COUNTER RHODESIAN VIOLATIONS OF BOTSWANA'S
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. SEVENTY (70) TONS OF WEAPONS (MIX
OF RIFLES, ROCKET LAUNCHERS, ETC.) DUE TO ARRIVE "ANY DAY"
ALONG WITH "NO MORE THAN HALF-DOZEN" ADVISORS. SOURCE
DOES NOT KNOW EXACT COMPOSITION OF WEAPONS SHIPMENT. IN
RESPONSE TO QUESTION, SOURCE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER GOB STILL
WANTS AR-18'S WHICH ARE IN HIS OPINION NOW "SUPERFLUOUS".
HE NOTED THEIR PURCHASE WOULD HAVE MADE "SEVERE DENT"
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 313052 TOSEC 340123

IN GOB BUDGET WHILE CHINESE ARMS ARE "FREE".

2. BECAUSE GOB DECISION REPORTED ABOVE WOULD REPRESENT
AN IMPORTANT NEW DEPARTURE IN GOB POLICY, WE HAVE TAKEN
INFORMAL, LOW-KEY SOUNDINGS IN GOB AND WITH INFOMRED
COLLAAGUES TO TEST REPORT. IN ABSENCE U.K. HIGH

COMMISSIONER (OUT TODAY) I SAW HEAD OF CHANCERY WHO (A) HAD HEARD RUMORS OF ACTIVE PRC ARMS OFFER FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, (B) HAD DISCOUNTED SUCH REPORTS UNTIL RECENTLY BUT NOW BOTH HIGH COMMISSIONER AND HE ARE READY TO BELIEVE ABOVE REPORT MAY BE TRUE, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF UK-US "LACK OF SUCCESS" IN DELIVERING RIFLES, AND (C) SAID THAT GOB DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE MERAFHE HAS BEEN ABSENT IN DAR ES SALAAM IN RECENT DAYS WHICH HIGH COMMISSION ASSUMED WAS RELATED TO PRC ARMS SUPPLY.

3. IN AME CONNECTION DCM CALLED ON MINEXTAFF SECRETARY MPOTOKWANE WHO REAFFIRMED WHAT MINISTER MOGWE SAID LAST WEEK (REF A), NAMELY THAT GOB HAS MADE NO FIRM DECISION ABOUT ARMS ACQUISITION. HE MAINTAINED GOB IS STILL CASTING ABOUT FOR BEST ARMS DEAL, SPECIFICALLY REFERRING TO STANDING SOVIET OFFER.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH GOB MINEXTAFF SECRETARY SAID NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE, THE SEQUENCE OF RECENT EVENTS, ESPECIALLY OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS, LENDS A CERTAIN CREDIBILITY TO THE REPORT THAT GOB HAS DECIDED TO ACCEPT ARMS OFFER FROM PRC. OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT HAVE BEEN CALLING PUBLICLY FOR GOB TO REQUEST MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM SOVIETS AND CUBANS. AMBASSADOR SOLODOVNIKOV CLEARLY INTENDED TO PUT ADDITIONAL PUBLIC PRESSURE ON GOB BY MEANS OF HIS DECEMBER 17 PRESS STATEMENT IN LUSKA A (REF B). STILL, PRESIDENT KHAMA, MOGWE, AND OTHERS WHO WERE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH SOVIET ROLE IN ANGOLA, PROBABLY DO NOT TRUST SOVIET MOTIVES IN SOUTH-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 313052 TOSEC 340123

ERN AFRICA. CONVERSELY, GOB HAS NO DOUBT BEEN IMPRESSED WITH GENERALLY LOW-KEY CHINESE PRESENCE HERE AND PERFORMANCE IN AFRICA. FROM GOB PERSPECTIVE, ACCEPTING CHINESE OFFER COULD BE BEST WAS OF (A) SILENCING OPPOSITION CRITICS CLAIMING THAT GOB NOT PROTECTING BOTSWANA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, (B) KEEPING SOVIET INFLUENCE HERE TO A MINIMUM, AND (C) OBTAINING NEEDED ARMS AT NO COST. NORLAND UNQUOTE ROBINSON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, ARMS, PROCUREMENT, NATIONAL SECURITY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE313052
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760475-0959
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976123/aaaaacgc.tel
Line Count: 106
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 GABORONE 2364, 77 LUSAKA 3381
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <14 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORTED GOB DECISION TO ACQUIRE PRC ARMS AND ADVISORS
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, BC, CH, RH
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006